



Summary of Historic Properties at NASA Ames Research Center



Shenandoah Plaza National Historic District

The Naval Air Station Sunnyvale, later renamed Moffett Field, was created in 1933 with the construction of Hangar One as docking station for the USS Macon, the largest aircraft in the world at the time.

- Hangar One was nominated by the Navy Chief of Naval Operations as a U.S. Navy Historic Site on January 3, 1966
- The Historic District was nominated by the US Navy and accepted into the National Register of Historic Places on Feb. 24, 1994.
- The Historic District was conveyed to NASA on July 1, 1994 as part of a federal military base reduction and closure action.

The Historic District consists of:

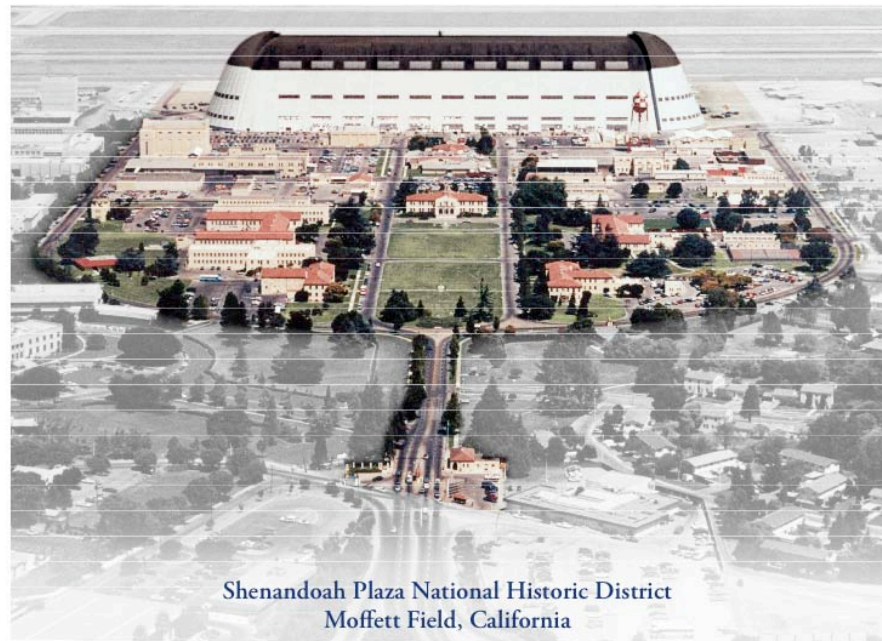
- 124 Acres
- 22 Contributing Buildings / Structures
- 9 Contributing Houses
- 3 Monuments
- Total floor area of historic buildings is 1,498,000 SF



Shenandoah Plaza Historic District



1933



Shenandoah Plaza National Historic District
Moffett Field, California

2006



Description of the Shenandoah Plaza Historic District

The Shenandoah Plaza Historic District consists of a large number of buildings that were constructed approximately over a 60-year timeframe beginning in the early 1930s. The buildings are clustered in a formal campus-like layout that is defined by a western-facing gated entrance and a landscape that includes mature trees, shrubs, and manicured lawns.

The District can be easily divided into its stylistic components that also define the different eras of construction over the base's period of early development.

The oldest and most historically significant buildings, from an architectural and engineering standpoint, form a coherent core, including the formal cluster of buildings dating from 1933 and those that lead up to, and include, the imposing Hangar #1 (the original dirigible hangar), and Hangar's 2 and 3 from the WWII period. The historic area is bounded by Bushnell Road on the north, the automobile parking spaces behind Sayre Avenue on the east, Westcoat Road on the south, and the entry, Clark Road, on the west. The central area is laid out in an axial plan in a northeasterly direction with the original buildings symmetrically placed along a grand central greensward. In addition to this very defined central space where the earliest major buildings of the district are located, there is an equally significant adjunct of nine officers' residences clustered around Berry Drive just to the south of the main gated entrance in another formally laid out plan with grass medians, a grass island at the end of the southern cul-de-sac, and a characteristically suburban curved residential street. In keeping with the symmetry that was so strong to the original plan, another unbuilt residential complex was originally planned for the northern side of the entrance drive.

These earliest buildings, which were designed by the Navy Department Bureau of Yards and Docks, exemplify California's most popular contemporary architectural style of the 1920s and early 1930s. They are constructed in a late Spanish Colonial Revival architectural style (a style that was equally as popular in government construction in the eastern sections of the United States during the 1920s and into the early 1940s), as well as aspects that presage the modern designs of the international style, which would predominate in America architecture for the next thirty-five years (from approximately 1940 to 1975). *Continued on next page.*



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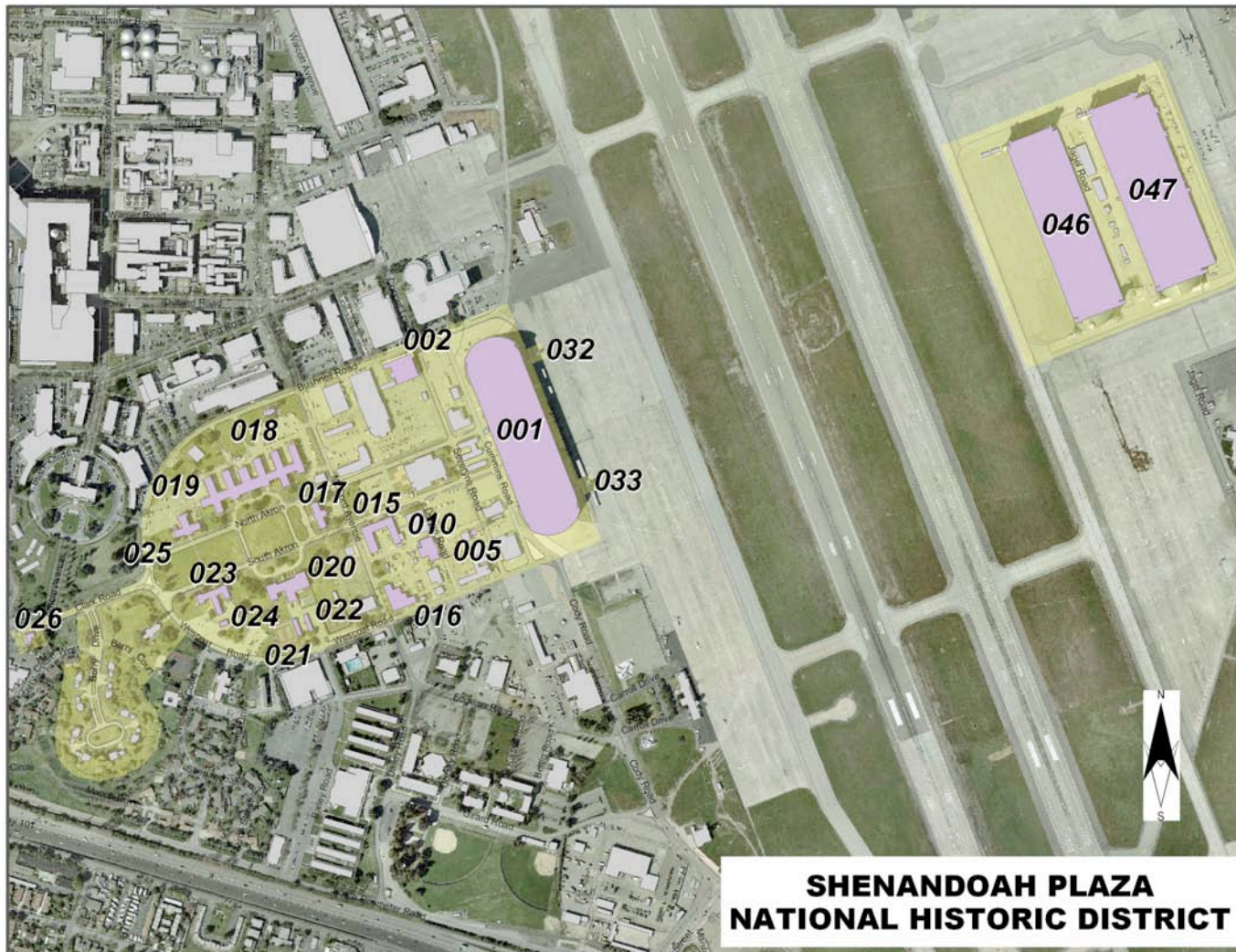
This hybrid style forms a unifying element that not only holds the architectural styles together, but gives the entire complex a very satisfying central theme. The style is ornamented in the most significant buildings (such as the Administration and Bachelor Officers' Quarters) and stripped of ornament, but no less supportive of the whole, in the smaller out buildings and garages. Interestingly, the building that is the *raison d'être* of the entire Naval Air Station, Hangar #1, eschews any historicism in its design, but rather reflects the highest Streamline Moderne forms of modern technology at its finest.

Another slightly newer cluster of buildings is also defined by their distinctive architectural style, which reflects the most popular designs of their time. These buildings are those structures built in the 1940s and early 1950s that are designed in a very plain international style of architecture defined by the simple stripped geometrical forms of the structures. These interesting examples are located at a few scattered sites within the original plat noted above (i.e. the Post Office, building #67, for example), as well as being set in a long row along Dailey Road between the original campus plan and the Bayshore Freeway. Other noteworthy buildings include the Control Tower (#158) at the far eastern edge of the site and the original Chapel Building (#86), which is a reinterpreted hybrid style that exhibits aspects of both a stripped Spanish Colonial Revival design and ornament hinting at more of a Mission Revival style. Additionally, the two slightly smaller, but no less impressive hangars (Hangars #2 and #3), were constructed across the runways to the east of Hangar #1. These buildings were designed for the smaller blimps that replaced the huge rigid-framed dirigibles of the 1930s for which Hangar #1 was designed. They also were designed in a much more prosaic and conventional architectural style than the metal sheathed Hangar #1.

A building that provides visual compatibility with the 1930s Spanish Colonial Revival buildings is the Chapel, noted earlier as building #86. This is due both to its physical location within the historic district, as well as to its architectural design, which is much more compatible with the older buildings on the base rather than the later international styled buildings. Early photos of the building illustrated a structure whose basic form of a rather simply pitched cruciform plan appears to be a very standard designed archetype military base chapel of the 1940s. But to this basic form, the designers add very site specific detailing which, though not technically a re-creation of the Spanish Colonial Revivals around it, very handsomely picks up hints of the building characteristics of the older structures. These details include, most importantly, the cupola, which mimics the tower on the Administration Building, and the projecting curvilinear portico with its stone-like entry frame, which takes directly from the Spanish Colonial Revival interpretations surrounding. The end result is good example of a new structure that is designed carefully to contribute to the established historic district.



Map of the Shenandoah Plaza Historic District





Contributing Properties within Shenandoah Plaza Historic District

<i>Building Number</i>	<i>Building Name/Historic Use</i>	<i>Year Built</i>	<i>Eligible</i>	<i>Reason</i>
Hangar 1	Hangar 1	1933	Y	A,C
46	Hangar 2	1943	Y	A,C
47	Hangar 3	1943	Y	A,C
2	Balloon Hangar	1933	Y	A,C
5	Water Tower	1933	Y	A,C
10	Heat Plant	1933	Y	A,C
15	Fire Station/Laundry	1933	Y	A,C
16	Locomotive Crane Shed	1933	Y	A,C
17	Admirals Building	1933	Y	A,C
18	Aerological Center	1933	Y	A,C
19	Bachelor Enlisted Quarters	1933	Y	A,C
20	Bachelor Officers Quarters	1933	Y	A,C
21	Bachelor Officers Garage	1933	Y	A,C
22	Bachelor Officers Garage	1933	Y	A,C
23	Dispensary	1933	Y	A,C
24	Ambulance Garage	1933	Y	A,C
25	Bowling Alley/Theater	1933	Y	A,C
26	Gate House/Iron Fence	1933	Y	A,C
32	Floodlight Tower	1933	Y	A,C
33	Floodlight Tower	1933	Y	A,C
37	Scale House	1933	Y	A,C
40	Flagpole	1933	Y	A,C
55	Heat Plant for Hangars 2 and 3	1943	Y	A,C
	Anchor		Y	A,C
	Commons	1933	Y	A,C